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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Planning

Participants: Dr. Lewis M. Branscomb, Director
National Bureau of Standards (NBS)
Dr. Edgar L. Piret
Counselor for Scientific Affairs

Place & Date: American Embassy, Paris
October 6, 1970

Subject: Proposed International Computer Institute

Reference: Paris 9240 of July 10, 1970

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Dr. Branscomb said that Dr. Edward E. David, Jr., Science Advisor to the President, had contacted him regarding the above Institute. The National Bureau of Standards Center for Computer Science is considerably concerned with software standards. Dr. Branscomb believes the ICC would be a remarkable institution if it succeeds, but feels that while needed, the probability is that it will not work. Since it is needed, the U.S. couldn't oppose it, and must show a warm if not wholly active attitude towards it.

The NBS has a great interest in the field, but very little funding to meet its responsibilities. Dr. Branscomb has offered the help of Dr. Herbert R. J. Grosch, NBS, to Dr. David and Herman Pollack. Grosch has recently been transferred from the leadership of the NBS Computer Center to responsibility for its international affairs. He is presently on his way to Japan and may or may not be a delegate to the next meeting scheduled in Paris, October 20-21, 1970. He noted that according to his letter to me of September 20, Dr. David had conferred with Herman Pollack, and that the representation is now in Herman's hands.

Dr. Ruth Davis (known professionally by her maiden name - married to Lt. Col. Lehr) will soon become the new head of the NBS Center for Computer Sciences. She has had very considerable experience, having developed the MEDLARS Computer System and headed the computer organization of DHEW. She was highly recommended to Branscomb by Dr. Ed. David. Dr. Davis is very interested in policy, is forceful, and is very good in discussion at meetings. Her appointment has not yet been announced.

Dr. Branscomb feels that a successful International Computer Institute would demand a group of at least fifty workers and consequently for

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-2-

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U.S. participation at least four or five persons would be required if the Institute is to make any important dent in the field. If the Institute did develop successfully, then the NIS could assign someone to it; however, the Institute is nowhere near this point at present.

cc: Mr. Herman Pollack
Mr. Nelson P. Sievering, Jr. ✓

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 20, 1970

Dear Ed:

Your congratulatory letter of September 16th is much appreciated here. Unfortunately, my new post means that I will not be attending the October meeting in Paris. However, I have conferred with Herman Pollack and believe that he will have adequate representation on hand and will have a U. S. position.

Please be assured of my continuing interest in this whole matter and also my confidence in your ability to represent us in all but the most technical aspects of software engineering. I particularly wanted you to know how much I appreciated your insights and help at the last meeting in Paris. I know you will give my replacement the same excellent insights.

Very cordially yours,



Edward E. David, Jr.
Science Adviser

Dr. Edgar L. Piret
Counselor for Scientific Affairs
The American Embassy
Paris, France